

reliable electricity in the next 20 years is nuclear power. We invented it. We know how to use it. The rest of the world is taking advantage of it. Why don't we? Especially in this economy, when we have nearly 10 percent unemployment, when in Tennessee and Virginia and in the Midwest we are trying to find ways to rebuild the economy, when we know that cheap energy is the key to new jobs and that high-priced energy drives jobs overseas looking for cheap energy, why are we ignoring the cheap energy strategy for dealing with global warming, cheap energy based on nuclear power, No. 1; electric cars and trucks, No. 2; offshore drilling for natural gas and oil which we are still going to need, and pushing ahead with mini Manhattan projects in energy research and development to figure out renewable energy and help make it cost competitive while we move ahead?

This is not only the fastest way to increase American energy independence, clean the air, and reduce global warming, it is the best way to help strained family budgets and a sick economy with 10 percent unemployment.

I thank the President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I ask for the clerk to report the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2918, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2918) making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Nelson (NE) amendment No. 1365, in the nature of a substitute.

McCain amendment No. 1366 (to amend No. 1365), to strike the earmark for the Durham Museum in Omaha, NE.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, we are returning to the Legislative Branch Committee bill for further consideration today. It is my understanding that my colleague from Oklahoma has an amendment he would like to offer. He was here. Perhaps he will rejoin us shortly.

To recap, this is the legislative branch bill, which has a number of different important issues in it, not the least of which is the fact that when you compare the percentage of increase this year with previous years, it is an effective 2.4-percent increase. We controlled the growing costs associated with the new Visitor Center, which were significant in the last budget.

Let me, at this point, yield to the Senator from Oklahoma.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 1369 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1365

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I wish to spend a few minutes talking about the legislative branch and us and where we find ourselves. I do have an amendment and I appreciate the consideration of it.

Right now, the average income in this country is down four-tenths of 1 percent this year. Historically, people wonder why Congress cannot control spending. They cannot control spending because they cannot even control their own budget. We are going to see about a 3.2-percent increase in the bill. The House is coming in at 6.1. In conference, we will decide what the legislative branch increase in expenses is on the American public. The reason that spending is out of control and the reason we are shackling our grandchildren with an enormous amount of debt—another \$5 trillion in the next 5 years—is because we don't even do a good job managing our own office budgets.

I am on the floor a lot complaining about wasteful spending, earmarks, and other issues. I don't do that without setting the proper example in my own office. I have been here 4 complete years. I am in my fifth year. During that time, I have turned back, in 2005, \$321,000; in 2006, \$529,000; in 2007, \$516,000; and in 2008, \$491,000—about 16 to 17 percent of my budget.

If I can do that, the question the American people ought to ask is: Why can't everybody up here do that? Why can't we manage our own legislative branch expenses? With the economic environment in which we find ourselves today, the American people ought to be asking what are our elected leaders doing to cut their expenses because we are borrowing a good portion of this money. Why are we not setting an example? If we don't do it, then we are certainly not going to have the various Federal agencies do it.

If you look at spending increases, outside the omnibus and the Recovery Act, Congress increased spending almost 7.2 percent last year. The budget has in it 7.3 percent. That is three times the rate of income growth prior to this recession. Yet we are growing the government three, four times faster, and we are growing our own budgets two and a half or three times faster. This time, it will be five or six times faster than Americans' income is growing.

The question has to be asked: If we are not good stewards with our own of-

fices, how can we be good stewards with the money entrusted to us?

Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 1369 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] proposes an amendment numbered 1369 to amendment No. 1365.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require expenditures by every Senate office be posted online for the public to review)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

Section 105(a) of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act 1965 (Public Law 88-454; 2 U.S.C. 104a) is amended—

(1) in the last sentence of paragraph (1), by striking "shall" and inserting "may"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(6) Beginning with the report covering the first full semiannual period of the 112th Congress, the Secretary of the Senate—

"(1) shall publicly post on-line on the website of the Senate each report in a searchable, itemized format as required under this section;

"(2) shall issue each report required under this section in electronic form; and

"(3) may issue each report required under this section in other forms at the discretion of the Secretary of the Senate."

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, this is a very simple amendment. It says we will take the money we spend and make available online to the American people how we spent it. Right now, there are a limited number of books published. We transfer it from computers to a book, but we don't give it to the American people so they can see how we are spending money on our office accounts. Senators NELSON of Nebraska and REID have graciously said they support this amendment. We will have limited debate.

The one way to get this spending under control in our individual offices, as well as in the Federal Government, is to make available to the American people how we spend it. So my hope is this will be a short period of time, and at the end of this year, the American people can go on a Web site and see how TOM COBURN spent his money, in terms of running the office of the junior Senator from Oklahoma. I think they will find I am as frugal with their money in my office as I am trying to be frugal on the floor when it comes to wasteful spending. There is \$350 billion worth of waste that will go through this year, without one stroke of it being eliminated—\$350 billion worth of waste and not one legitimate stroke will be eliminated as we go through the Appropriations Committees and the President's budget—and he is trying to eliminate some. But we won't even do a line-by-line review.